SOMETHING TO GO BY

ONE day late in the summer a neighbor dropped in at a friend's home and found her at work cutting out garments for the children. The visitor insisted that the other should go ahead with her work, so after talking a few minutes in a friendly way she took up her shears, straightened the cloth out carefully and, after planning the dimensions in her mind, began cutting.

Her friend watched her a few moments with great interest, then asked, "Do you not use a pattern in cutting out your garments? I don't see how you can make dresses without a pattern."

"No," said the mother. "I don't need a pattern. I just cut the dress out the way I think it ought to go. It is much quicker and easier than to bother with patterns."

The little dress was cut out and laid aside, and after a few minutes the neighbor rose to go. As she turned, her eyes fell again on the little dress lying on the table, all ready to be sewed. At once there came into her mind the picture of that little girl, whom she knew so well, who passed her house every winter morning on her way to school, going down the street with her books in her hand and wearing that same little dress. It was to be her everyday dress through the whole winter, and the picture that would be left in her mind and in the minds of her teacher and her playmates would be fixed to a certain extent by that dress just cut out without a pattern.

"Now I know why those children are never so neat and trim and orderly-looking as the other children," the lady said to herself as she went down the street. "It is because their mother finds it quicker and easier to cut out their clothes without a pattern—because she just cuts them out by eye the way she thinks they ought to go.

"It is not only in cutting out dresses that we need a pattern," she thought. "There are too many of us who think that it takes less time and care to plan our lives without a pattern. And such ungainly things our lives turn out to be! I am sure that in God's eyes we look far worse than the little girls who wear patternless dresses look to me. We were never meant to depend entirely on our own wisdom and judgment. We need a pattern. That is one reason why God sent his own Son into the world to live with men."

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